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GIANT-SIZED 50TH ISSUE!

SPIDER-MAN

Scott Hanna

DIRECT EDITION

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STAN LEE PRESENTS: A SPIDER MAN

SON OF THE HUNTER

50TH ANNIVERSARY SAGA...

HOWARD MACKIE AND TOM LYLE
STORY AND ART

SCOTT HANNA
INKS

STARKINGS/COMICRAFT LETTERS
KEVIN TINSLEY COLORS
DANNY FINGEROTH EDITOR
TOM DEFALCO CHIEF

You have sent your words to me from beyond the grave, father.

Every night since your journal was delivered into my hands, I have studied... absorbed... your final thoughts.

Thoughts of crushing THE SPIDER!

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Now I stand in this mansion you called home while in America...

...the place you last confronted the Spider.*

Armed only with your words...

...and your knife...

* DO YOURSELF A REAL FAVOR AND TREAT YOURSELF TO KRAVEN'S LAST HUNT TRADE PAPERBACK.--D.

...I have prepared a final test for myself.

A test to ensure that I am worthy of all that I have inherited from you.

These men are skilled in killing arts from around the world, but...

...compared to the skills and strength I have received from you... KRAVEN THE HUNTER...

...they are NOTHING!

This hunting knife was a favorite of yours.

You gave it to me on my eighteenth birthday...

As your father gave it to you.

With this family blade, I will cut away the stain placed on our family name by the Spider.

The Spider's scent permeates this place.

Even here.

This room in which the final hunt concluded.

The blood has been washed away, but the stain on the family name remains.

The Spider did it to us.

He pushed you over the edge of sanity.

In this room the world lost a great and noble HUNTER and I...

...lost a father.

FATHER! HEAR ME!

I, VLADIMIR KRAVINOFF, LAST OF OUR LINEAGE, DO VOW...

... THE SPIDER DIES TONIGHT!

I DO THIS FOR YOU, FATHER.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE, KRAVEN?

WHAT HAVE YOU HAD *ME* DO?

PETER PARKER, THE MAN, IS NO MORE.

I AM THE SPIDER.

PETER'S LIFE WAS A FARCE... A SHAM.

PETER?

I AM THE SPIDER.

ARE YOU THERE? IT'S ME... M.J.! PLEASE PICK UP THE PHONE, PETER!

I AM...

PLEASE, PETER, I NEED YOU... *AUNT MAY* NEEDS YOU!

...THE SPIDER.

THE DOCTORS... THEY DON'T KNOW HOW LONG AUNT MAY CAN LAST IN THE COMA... THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT DAMAGE WAS DONE BY THE STROKE...

I AM...

I ONLY RETURN TO THIS PLACE... HIS PLACE... FOR FOOD.

THIS LIFE OFFERS ME NOTHING.

NOTHING BUT PAIN.

RRRING

HI! YOU'VE REACHED THE HOME OF PETER AND MARY JANE PARKER. LEAVE A MESSAGE AND ONE OF US WILL GET BACK TO YOU.

AUNT ANNA IS HERE WITH ME...

...THE SPIDER.

PLEASE, PETER... WE... I... LOVE YOU!

PETER PARKER IS NO MORE.

I AM THE SPIDER.

HALF AN HOUR LATER...

THERE HE IS!

TONIGHT'S PREY!

THE NEWSPAPERS HAVE DUBBED HIM THE PALE RIDER.

FOR THE PAST WEEK HE'S APPEARED OUT OF NOWHERE IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE CITY...

...UNLOADED HIS WEAPONS, KILLED AND WOUNDED DOZENS, AND DISAPPEARED AGAIN.

THE POLICE DON'T HAVE A CLUE AS TO WHY HE'S DOING IT.

THEY HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO TRACK HIM DOWN...

...TO STOP HIM.

TONIGHT...

...HE'LL BE STOPPED.

ANOTHER LITTLE INSECT LOOKING TO BE KILLED?

COME ON, I'LL DO YOU A FAVOR... LIKE I HAVE FOR THE REST... AND PUT YOU OUT OF YOUR MISERY!

WE'VE ALL GOT MISERY WE WANT TO ESCAPE.

LET ME GIVE YOU A HAND!

MISERY?

MINE?

NO! PETER'S.

I AM THE SPIDER. I HAVE NOTHING TO ESCAPE.

STAND STILL. IN A MINUTE IT WILL ALL BE OVER. DEATH WILL BRING YOU PEACE FROM ALL THE PAIN OF THIS WORLD.

AUNT MAY...

I DON'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT IT!

SHE COULD DIE!

I DON'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT IT!

I DON'T NEED MY WEAPONS TO DO THE DEED.

STAND STILL. YOU'LL THANK ME WITH YOUR DYING BREATH.

WHY AM I FIGHTING THIS GUY?

SHE NEEDS ME!

NO!

SHE NEEDS HIM!!! PETER.

AND HE CAN'T DO ANYTHING FOR HER! FOR ANYONE!

YOU'RE WASTING MY TIME, MAN. I'VE GOT PEOPLE TO KILL.

I'M OUTTA HERE.

I AM THE SPIDER.

PARKER'S WEAKNESS ALMOST LETS THE RIDER GET AWAY.

THE CITY... THE WORLD... NEEDS ME!

THWIP

AND I CAN HELP THEM ALL!

MEANWHILE...

YOUR WORDS, FATHER.

YOUR WORDS.

VLADIMIR: YOU GAVE ORDERS TO BE NOTIFIED, WHEN THE SPIDER WAS LOCATED!

I HAVE BROUGHT YOUR GEAR.

THIS IS GOOD, GREGOR, MY OLD TEACHER.

THE HUNT CAN BEGIN!

AT THAT MOMENT, IN THE QUEENS RESIDENCE OF MAY PARKER...

...A LONE FIGURE WALKS THROUGH THE DARK AND EMPTY HOUSE.

BEN, MAY AND PETER...

...YOU MADE A LOVING AND FINE LOOKING FAMILY. YOU --

SOME-ONE'S COMING!

GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE ANYONE SEES ME!

SOMEONE RUNNING THROUGH THE DARK.

NO ONE IS SUPPOSED TO BE HERE. THEY'RE ALL AT THE HOSPITAL.

THIS CAN ONLY BE A...

...BURGLAR!

HOW DARE HE!

HOW DARE HE TRY TO OUTRUN THE SPIDER!

HOW DARE...

...HE?

GONE.

BUT HOW?

AND WHERE TO?

THIS PHOTO OF ME... NO... PETER... AND AUNT MAY... AND UNCLE BEN...

I'M DOING THIS ALL FOR YOU.

I BECAME SPIDER-MAN FOR YOU!

MEANWHILE...

IT IS A FINE NIGHT FOR A HUNT, GREGOR.

KEEP SWEEPING THE CITY FOR THE SPIDER'S MOVEMENTS WITH THE MOTION SENSORS.

WE WILL REMAIN IN SIGHT AT ALL TIMES. IF ANYTHING SHOULD GO WRONG--

NOTHING WILL GO WRONG!

YOU HAVE BEEN LIKE FAMILY TO ME SINCE THE TIME OF MY BIRTH, BUT THIS IS *MY* MISSION.

DO *NOT* INTERFERE.

THIS IS BETWEEN THE SPIDER AND *MYSELF!*

THIS IS ABOUT MORE THAN THE KILL.

THIS IS THE HUNT OF *HONOR!*

I WILL RUN THE SPIDER TO GROUND... AND THEN... AS HE STARES INTO MY EYES, HE WILL KNOW THAT IT IS THE SON OF *KRAVEN* WHO TAKES HIS LIFE.

THE SPILLING OF *HIS* BLOOD WILL WASH AWAY THE BLOT HE HAS PUT UPON MY FAMILY'S NAME.

I HAVE HIS SCENT, GREGOR.

THIS TORN PIECE OF THE SPIDER'S COSTUME...

ALL OF MY SENSES HAVE BEEN HEIGHTENED BY MY FATHER'S SERUM.

I *WILL* RUN HIM TO GROUND, GREGOR!

GREGOR! CAN YOU HEAR ME? IS THE AUDIO LINK FUNCTIONING?

NEW YORKERS READ THE BUGLE THE BEST SOURCE FOR YOUR DAILY NEWS!

YES, VLAD. I AM HERE.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

BACK IN QUEENS...

BEEN THROUGH THE HOUSE A DOZEN TIMES.

NOTHING IS MISSING.

WHAT WAS THAT MAN DOING HERE?

WHAT DID HE WANT?

HAVE TO KEEP CHECKING.

THIS TRUNK... IT BELONGS TO PETER PARKER.

FULL OF SECRETS. FULL OF... WHAT'S THIS?

THE JOURNAL OF PROFESSOR MILES WARREN.

HE TRIED TO TAKE AWAY MY LIFE!

AS SO MANY HAVE BEFORE AND SINCE.

WARREN TRIED TO DESTROY ME BY CREATING A CLONE OF ME.

HE FAILED.

THEY TRIED TO DESTROY ME... TRIED TO BE ME!

THEY ALL FAILED.

I AM THE SPIDER!

I AM SPIDER-MAN!

NOBODY CAN TAKE THIS AWAY FROM ME!

I AM SPIDER-MAN!

A SHORT TIME LATER, ATOP THE 59TH STREET BRIDGE...

The scent grows stronger.

The Spider is in Queens.

Our moment is almost at hand... FATHER!

UNCLE BEN HAS GUIDED THE PATH OF THE SPIDER FOR ALL THESE YEARS SINCE HIS DEATH.

WITH GREAT POWER MUST COME GREAT RESPONSIBILITY.

I DON'T COME OUT HERE TO THE CEMETERY TO VISIT YOU ENOUGH, UNCLE BEN.

STILL, I DON'T FORGET THE LESSONS YOU TAUGHT ME, EVEN IN YOUR DEATH—

HELP ME, PLEASE.

MUGGERS. ASSAULTING THAT OLD MAN.

SPIDER-MAN!

THEY'RE... GETTING AWAY...

NO, THEY'RE NOT. I WON'T LET THEM.

THWIP

THWOP

BOLOS SNAPPED THEIR NECKS.

BUT WHO--?

KRAVEN?!

NO! NOT KRAVEN!

THWIP

CAN'T BE!

KRAVEN IS DEAD!

I'VE MADE MY PEACE WITH HIM!

HAVE YOU REALLY, SPIDER?

I THINK NOT.

ARRGH!

ELECTRIC SHOCK...!

SPIDER-SENSE WARNED ME OF THE ATTACK, BUT HIS SPEED...

...FAR FASTER THAN KRAVEN EVER WAS!

FWP

YOU HAVE TASTED THE DRUG ON THE TIP OF THAT DART BEFORE, SPIDER.

MY FATHER'S JOURNAL SAYS HE PREPARED IT ESPECIALLY FOR *YOU*.

THE JOURNALS ALSO MENTION YOUR ABILITY TO SEEMINGLY ANTICIPATE ATTACKS BEFORE THEY COME.

NOW I HAVE PLACED US ON EVEN GROUND FOR THE *HUNT*.

WHO *ARE* YOU?

HAVE YOU NOT GUESSED YET, SPIDER?

I AM VLADIMIR, SON OF SERGEI KRAVINOFF.

NOW I TAKE THE NAME MY FATHER BESTOWED UPON ME YEARS AGO.

THE NAME OF THE GREATEST HUNTER OF ALL TIME. THE GODS THEMSELVES FEARED HIS PROWESS.

TODAY IS THE DAY I EARN THE NAME...

the Grim Hunter!

NOW RUN, SPIDER-MAN! RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!

FEEL SO AFRAID.

HAVE TO RUN.

TONIGHT, FATHER.

IT ENDS TONIGHT.

RUNNING... SCARED...

SHOULDN'T RUN.

RUNNING IS FOR MEN.

I AM THE SPIDER!

SPIDERS CLIMB!

SPIDERS SCURRY.

SPIDERS HEAD TOWARD THE DARKNESS.

YOUR SPEED HAS NOT IMPRESSED ME, SPIDER.

THE HUNT ENDS NOW, AND...

...I WILL HAVE YOUR HEAD AS A TROPHY FOR MY FATHER'S GRAVE.

TOO WEAK FROM THE DRUG.

TOO SCARED.

HIS STRENGTH AND SPEED ARE GREATER THAN KRAVEN'S EVER WERE.

CAN'T THINK.

MEN THINK.

SPIDERS FIGHT!

SO, THERE IS SOMETHING LEFT IN YOU, SPIDER!

IT IS OF LITTLE CONSEQUENCE.

YOU ARE ALREADY DEAD.

SOON ENOUGH YOU WILL BECOME AWARE OF THIS.

Yes. Flee, spider.

Flee before the Grim Hunter.

The climbing, the jumping, the strength...

...all described so perfectly in my father's journal.

The Journal predicted how you would react to the concoction of herbs and other drugs which are now coursing through your veins.

Why could my father not defeat you?

He knew you... his prey... so well.

Yes. The webbing. Use it to achieve the high ground... The BRIDGE.

My father said you always seek to control the hunt from above.

This time, the heights will be your DOWNFALL.

I am saddened that this hunt ends so quickly, spider.

And sadder still for taking the victory my father could never achieve.

You cannot dodge my spears energy blasts forever.

And then... with your web line severed...

...the hunt is over.

Plunge to your watery grave, spider.

WATER.

SO DARK AND COLD.

THE SPIDER HAS ESCAPED.

ESCAPED INTO THE DARKNESS.

NOW I REST.

SO TIRED FROM FIGHTING...

...RUNNING.

I AM THE SPIDER... NOT THE MAN...

...AND STILL I LOSE TO THE HUNTER.

WHY?

AUNT MAY.

UNCLE BEN.

MARY JANE.

THEY LOVED ME.

THE MAN.

I AM NOT JUST THE SPIDER.

I AM... SPIDER--

MAN!

I READ THE CURRENTS, SPIDER.

THE HUNT IS OVER. NOW THE KILL REMAINS.

MAN.

I AM A MAN.

A MAN WITH THE ABILITIES OF A SPIDER!

A MAN WHO CAN THINK!

A MAN WHO CAN TRIUMPH OVER THE DRUGS FLOWING THROUGH MY VEINS.

A MAN WHO CAN FIGHT...

...AND WIN!

I AM SPIDER-MAN!

WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP

IT'S OVER.

NOW WHAT?!

STAND BACK FROM HIM, SPIDER-MAN.

STAND BACK OR I SHALL OPEN FIRE!

NO!

NO MORE THREATS!

NO MORE!

I AM A MAN, BUT...

...A MAN WITH THE SAME FAULTS AS ANY OTHER.

A MAN WHO IS TIRED OF THE THREATS, THE ATTACKS, THE VIOLENCE!

A MAN WITH THE PROPORTIONATE STRENGTH OF A SPIDER.

A MAN WHOSE RAGE NEEDS A RELEASE!

I AM RETAINER TO THE *KRAVINOFF* FAMILY. I *WILL* PROTECT *VLAD* WITH MY DYING BREATH, BUT... ...I WILL NOT FIGHT!

THE HUNT BELONGS TO VLAD. IT IS A LEGACY PASSED FROM FATHER TO SON.

KRAVEN AND I MADE OUR PEACE. THIS IS *MADNESS!*

UNFORTUNATELY, THAT TOO MAY BE PART OF THE LEGACY.

PREPARE YOURSELF, SPIDER MAN. HE HAS VOWED TO SLAY YOU IN THE NAME OF HIS FATHER.

THE *HUNT* IS NOT FINISHED.

IT NEVER IS.

I'LL LEARN TO LIVE WITH IT.

MEANWHILE, YOU ARE BOTH OFF TO THE POLICE.

WITH YOUR HELP, HE KILLED TWO MEN BACK THERE.

I GUESS THAT'S PART OF THE LEGACY, TOO.

I HAVE A LEGACY OF MY OWN TO LIVE UP TO.

ONE THAT KEEPS PEOPLE LIKE YOU OFF THE STREETS.

TONIGHT I'M DOING WHAT I VOWED TO DO A LONG TIME AGO.

TONIGHT I AM SPIDER-MAN.

The End

Next: This mag's chapter of

POWER & RESPONSIBILITY

See our letters page for details!

SEVERAL YEARS AGO IN THE WOODS OF NORTHERN MAINE...
WHAT DO WE HUNT TONIGHT, GREGOR?
BEAR? OR PERHAPS WOLF? IT DOESN'T MATTER..
..I CAN HANDLE THEM ALL.
DO NOT BE BOASTFUL, VLADIMIR! A TRUE HUNTER NEVER UNDERESTIMATES THE PREY!
YOU WILL BE WELL ADVISED TO REMEMBER THESE WORDS TONIGHT OF ALL NIGHTS.
THIS IS THE NIGHT WE TEST ALL THE SKILLS OF THE HUNT YOUR FATHER HAS HAD ME PASS ON TO YOU.

STAN LEE PRESENTS...

RITE OF PASSAGE

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DO NOT ATTEMPT TO FRIGHTEN ME, TEACHER...

...JUST GIVE ME THE WEAPON I WILL BE USING AND ALLOW ME TO TRACK MY PREY.

IT IS TIME FOR YOU TO UTILIZE YOUR MOST DEADLY WEAPON, YOUNG ONE. YOUR WITS!

NOW DO IT!

GREGOR!

MY FATHER WILL SEE YOU SKINNED ALIVE FOR THIS!

BOY, YOU MAKE ENOUGH NOISE FOR EVERY CREATURE IN THE WOODS TO KNOW YOU ARE HERE

HUH?

COME. I WOULD HAVE WORDS WITH YOU

IF YOU WISH TO TALK, THEN YOU COME TO ME!

THUD

VERY WELL, BOY.

...WE WILL NOT TALK.

YOU HAD BEST START RUNNING AS IF YOUR LIFE DEPENDS ON IT!

RUN, BOY! FOR TONIGHT...

...YOU ARE THE PREY OF THE GRIM HUNTER!

SSST

THE GRIM HUNTER?

A STORY... A LEGEND.. GREGOR TOLD ME AS A CHILD.

FIERCEST HUNTER AND WARRIOR OF ALL TIME. THE GODS THEMSELVES FEARED HIS PROWESS.

BUT IT WAS JUST A STORY!

WHO IS THIS--?

LOST IN YOUR OWN THOUGHTS, BOY?

I WAS TOLD YOU WERE WELL TRAINED.

AFRAID, BOY?

THAT? JUST A SPIDER

NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

OR IS IT?

A HUNTER LIKE YOU WOULD NEVER FEAR INSIGNIFICANT INSECTS...WOULD HE?

NOOO!

GET THEM OFF OF ME!

I HATE SPIDERS!

RUN!

HAVE TO RUN!

BUT FROM WHAT?

AN INSECT AND A FAIRY TALE?

I AM VLADIMIR KRAVINOFF, SON OF SERGEI... KRAVEN THE HUNTER!

I DO NOT RUN! NOT FROM FAIRY TALES...

...NOR SPIDERS!

AN INSIGNIFICANT BUG AND A HORROR STORY TOLD TO YOUNG CHILDREN BY THEIR NURSEMAIDS!

I AM NO LONGER A CHILD!

A FEW MINUTES LATER...

THE YOUNG BOY STALKS THROUGH THE WOODS AS SILENTLY AS A PANTHER MOVING IN FOR THE KILL.

HE CALLS UPON EVERY HUNTING SKILL LEARNED FROM HIS HUNTING MASTER, GREGOR.

HIS MIND IS CLEAR.

EVERY THOUGHT FOCUSED UPON HIS PREY...

...ON THE KILL.

WELL PLAYED, BOY!

NOW THE GAME IS OVER.

I SEE THE FEAR NO LONGER CLOUDS YOUR EYES... YOUR MIND.

YOUR SKILLS ARE ADMIRABLE.

GREGOR HAS TAUGHT YOU WELL.

NOW IT IS TIME FOR YOUR TRAINING TO BEGIN IN *EARNEST.*

TOO LONG HAVE I ALLOWED US TO BE *SEPARATED.* IT IS TIME TO MAKE UP FOR WHAT HAS BEEN LOST...

...SON!

FATHER!

A HARSH TRIAL, YOUNG VLADIMIR. ONE WHICH YOUR MOTHER BEGGED ME NOT TO PUT YOU THROUGH.

I KNEW YOU WOULD NOT LET ME DOWN.

SOMEDAY YOUR PROWESS WILL SURPASS MINE... SURPASS THE LEGEND OF THE GRIM HUNTER.

ALWAYS KEEP ALIVE THE *KRAVINOFF* NAME, VLADIMIR. AND...

...FEAR NOTHING!

FOR YOU, FATHER!

ALWAYS FOR YOU!

THE END